

NEWS RELEASE

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Statewide Rate of Adult Safety Belt Use Continues to Rise For Seventh Consecutive Year

(Salt Lake City) A recent survey shows 86.9 percent of motor vehicle drivers and front seat passengers wear their safety belts, a 1.2 percent increase from the 2004 usage rate. The study observed motor vehicle occupants in the six counties that contribute 85% of the state's population: Cache, Davis, Salt Lake, Utah, Washington and Weber. The survey was conducted at 162 sites during five days in June 2005.

The survey found that females and people traveling on highways buckle up more often. While 90.4 percent of females use safety belts, only 85.0 percent of males buckle up. Furthermore, 89.5 percent of travelers buckle up on highways, whereas 85.4 percent use safety belts on local roads. Other survey results include:

- Drivers and front seat passengers in Davis County have the highest seatbelt use rate at 90.5 percent.
- Weber County has the lowest rate of seatbelt use at 85.2 percent.
- The largest increase in seatbelt use was seen on local roads in Washington County (85.6%), which is up 9.25 percentage points over 2004.
- Seatbelt use among males in Washington County (85.0%) is up by eight percentage points over 2004.

"Seatbelts save lives. Not wearing a seatbelt contributes to more fatalities than any other traffic related behavior," said Director David Beach, Utah Highway Safety. "We're pleased to see more citizens of Utah make the choice to buckle up." The complete study is available on the Utah Highway Safety Office's website at www.highwaysafety.utah.gov.

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